

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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## **Contra Costa County Now Accepting Applications for New Layoff Aversion Grant for Small Businesses**

*Grant to reimburse micro-businesses for expenses that help prevent layoffs, closure*

*Concord, Calif.* – The Workforce Development Board of Contra Costa County is now accepting applications for layoff aversion grants through its Small-Business Grant Program, providing up to \$5,000 in assistance for micro-businesses within Contra Costa County.

Priority will be given to these types of veteran-, woman- and minority-owned micro-businesses: retail, restaurants, hair salons, barber shops, nail salons, day spas and fitness studios. Also, priority will be given to businesses that have not received any COVID-19 related grants, such as the Economic Injury Disaster Loan (EIDL), Paycheck Protection Program (PPP) or city grants.

“Small businesses across our county, especially micro-businesses that typically have very little in the way of reserves to withstand an on-going crisis, are struggling to overcome the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic,” said WDBCCC Executive Director Donna Van Wert. “These grants are intended to support local businesses’ overall efforts to retain their employees and keep their doors open.”

Grants will be awarded as a reimbursement on approved purchases only. To be eligible for the grant, a business must meet the following requirements:

- Have a physical location within Contra Costa County.
- Have a current business license.
- Be currently open or have the intention of re-opening.
- Be current on their unemployment taxes and in good standing with the State of California.
- Demonstrate a need for support due to the impact of COVID-19 on their business.
- Have not received a micro-grant from another local government agency.

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Home-based businesses are not eligible for the grant, which is intended for physical, commercial storefronts.

Grant funds must be used to create solutions directly related to preventing potential layoffs or facility closures due to COVID-19. Examples of allowable reimbursable expenses include:

- Paying for services or tools for restaurants or retail establishments to convert to online sales or delivery, as a result of COVID-19 shelter-in-place orders and/or on-site and in-person service restrictions.
- Purchasing remote access equipment or software that allows employees to work from home rather than being laid off (e.g., computers, printers, telephones, headsets, video conferencing software, etc.).
- Purchasing cleaning/sanitation supplies and/or services that will allow an essential small business to maintain an on-site workforce and reduce risk of exposure.
- Other creative approaches and strategies to reduce or eliminate the need for layoffs.

Grant funds cannot be used for mortgage payments, payroll or employee support services, such as rent, childcare or transportation. Purchases must be made after the date of the signed executed award agreement. Funding is provided from the U.S. Department of Labor Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) and are subject to WIOA regulations and allowable cost expenses.

**The deadline to apply for the grant is Dec. 2, 2020, at 5 p.m., with no exceptions.** Applications may be submitted [online](#) or mailed to WDBCCC, 4071 Port Chicago, Concord, CA 94520 and must be **received** no later than the deadline. Award/agreement letters will be emailed to the email address on the application by Dec. 9, 2020.

To learn more about the grant, [visit our website](#), call the WDBCCC COVID-19 Resource Hotline at 833-320-1919 or email [bouncebackcoco@ehsd.cccounty.us](mailto:bouncebackcoco@ehsd.cccounty.us).

## About

Part of the Employment & Human Services Department (EHSD), the [Workforce Development Board of Contra Costa County](#) supports a robust network that creates and promotes dynamic education systems, high-performing businesses and a prosperous local economy with an abundance of high-quality jobs and skilled workers to fill them. Its 25-member board, appointed by the Contra Costa County Board of Supervisors, brings together leaders from business, economic development, education, labor, community-based organizations and public agencies to align a variety of resources and organizations to enhance the competitiveness of the local workforce and support economic vitality in the region. The WDBCCC designs its programs and services to help job seekers, employers, small businesses and youth.

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